

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01680 121510Z

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SUBJ: SCHOOL/BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS TRADE MISSION

REF: (A) STATE 170083; (B) LUSAKA 1631

1. NOT YET CLEAR TO EMB WHAT RANGE PRODUCTS TO BE INCLUDED IN MISSION, BUT FOLLOWING IS INITIAL GENERAL ASSESSMENT SHCOOL/ BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS MARKET FOR ZAMBIA.

2. BUSINESS: MAJOR OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERNAL UNDERGROUND COMMUNICATIONS FOR MINES. BOTH MINING COMPANIES INDICATE THEY INTERESTED POSSIBLE UNDERGROUND WIRELESS NETWORKS, BUT HAVE NOT YET FOUND SUITABLE EQUIPMENT FOR STANDARDIZATION. DIFFICULT ESTIMATE SALES POTENTIAL, BUT MIGHT RUN AS HIGH AS DOLS 1 MILLION. ZAMBIA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CORPORATION (ZESCO) BUILDING NES DOLS 5.4 MILLION CONTROL ROOM WHICH WILL REQUIRE CONTROL COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. SIEMENS AND PHILLIPS IN STRONG MARKET POSITION FOR PABX EQUIPMENT; US SALES THIS AREA LIKELY BE MARGINAL UNLESS US COMPANIES WILLING MAKE MAJOR SERVICE INVESTMENT.

3. GRZ IN PROCESS ARRANGING AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK/IBRD LOAN FOR MICROWAVE COMMUNICATIONS CONNECTING LINK WITH DAR ES SALAAM. WHILE PROJECT NOT YET FIRM, TOTAL COST EXPECTED BE DOLS 17 - 20 MILLION, OF WHICH SUBSTANTIAL PART WILL BE EQUIPMENT. THIS PROJECT IS LONG TERM POSSIBILITY RATHER THAN IMMEDIATE OPPORTUNITY. JAPANESE HEAVILY INVOLVED OTHER PROJECTS THIS FIELD ON BASIS CONCESSIONARY LOAN AND LIKELY OFFER STRONG COMPETITON.

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PAGE 02 LUSAKA 01680 121510Z

4. EDUCATIONAL: THOUGH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RECEIVED DOLS 6.2 MILLION BUDGET INCREASE THIS YEAR, VIRTUALLY ALL GOING FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION. ENGLISH FIRM BAIRD AND TATLOCK PRESENTLY EXCLUSIVE SCHOOL EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER TO GOVERNMENT, BUT EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS GRZ MINED WILL PROBABLY TURN THIS MONOPOLY (WORTH ABOUT DOLS 2.3 MILLION/YEAR) OVER TO NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF ZAMBIA (NEDCOZ) SOMETIME MID-1974. ALTHOUGH MOST GRZ SCHOOLS EQUIPPED WITH OVERHEAD SLIDE PROJECTORS AND RUDIMENTARY AUDIO-VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS, THERE SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITY INFLUENCE NEDCOZ FOR FUTURE. GRZ PRESENTLY GOING THROUGH BUDGET AUSTERITY PERIOD, BUT BY MID-1974 FINANCIAL POSITION OF GOVERNMENT AND SCHOOL NEEDS MAY PERMIT INCREASED EXPENDITURE THIS AREA. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WOULD BE EQUIPMENT CAPABLE OPERATING IN RURAL SCHOOLS WITH UNEVEN OR NO ELECTRICAL POWER. WHILE INTEREST IN EQUIPMENT EXISTS AT UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA, ALMOST ALL DEPTS HAVE TAKEN FUNDING CUTS OVER PAST TWO YEARS AND MARKET SMALL IN ANY CASE.

5. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE SPECIFIC INDICATION TYPES OF EQUIPMENT WHICH LIKELY BE FEATURED. POST COULD THEN COMMENT IN MORE DETAIL ON MARKET POTENTIAL. NELSON

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